

Below are some questions that we are asked most frequently. Can't find an answer to your question? [Email us](#) your question and we will respond to you directly, as well as possibly adding your question to our list of FAQs!

- [How do I report a crime?](#)
 - [When should I call 911?](#)
 - [My situation is not an emergency. What number do I call instead of 911?](#)
 - [I'm not sure if my situation is an emergency. What should I do?](#)
 - [What will the dispatcher ask when I call?](#)
 - [What if I dial 911 by mistake?](#)
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Q. How do I report a crime?

- To report a crime in progress or other emergency, call 911
- To report a non-emergency or cold crime, call dispatch at 509-332-2521
- To report graffiti, report online by clicking [here](#) or call dispatch at 509-332-2521
- To report nuisance code violations, report online by clicking [here](#) or call dispatch at 509-332-2521

For more detailed information, go to our "[Report a Crime/Incident](#)" page.

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Q. When should I call 911?

Examples of when to call 911 include:

- when there's a fire
- someone is unconscious after an accident, [drinking too much](#) , or an overdose of pills or drugs
- someone has trouble breathing, like during an [asthma attack](#) or seizure
- someone is choking
- someone is experiencing chest pain
- someone is bleeding uncontrollably
- you see a crime being committed, like a vehicle break-in, mugging, home burglary, etc.

Examples of when NOT to call 911 include:

- Your house or car was broken into yesterday.
- Your car was stolen sometime overnight.
- There are fraudulent charges on your bank account.
- You need to add additional items to the burglary report which you made last week.
- You wish to make a complaint about a noisy neighbor.
- There is an abandoned vehicle on your street

[Back to Top](#) **Q. *My situation is not an emergency. What number do I call instead of 911?***

For non-emergency situations in Pullman and Whitman County, call our regional dispatch center at 509-332-2521.

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Q. *I am not sure if my situation is an emergency. What should I do?*

If you're not sure whether the situation is a true emergency, authorities recommend calling 911 and letting the call-taker determine whether you need emergency help.

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Q. *What will the dispatcher ask when I call?*

All callers are asked a standard set of questions which will help the dispatcher prioritize your call, and will provide the responding personnel with information before their arrival. The following are just some of the questions we may ask you.

- "What is the emergency?"
- "What happened?"
- "Where are you?"
- "Where do you live?"
- "Who needs help?"
- "Who is with you?"

The purpose behind these questions is to ascertain the following information:

- **LOCATION:** Where is the problem occurring and where are you calling from? It is important to be as detailed as possible, providing street names, addresses, cross streets, building names and/or apartment numbers when possible. The more precise the information you provide, the faster that emergency personnel can respond.
- **NATURE OF THE PROBLEM:** Provide a basic description of what occurred and whether anyone is injured. Try to avoid slang when possible; we need to make sure everyone has an accurate idea of what is occurring.
- **TIME ELEMENT:** When did this occur? 5 minutes ago, 5 days ago, last year, has it been going on over a span of time (hours, days, or weeks).
- **PERSON DESCRIPTION:**
 - How many people are involved?
 - Physical descriptors: Gender, race, height, weight, hair color, facial hair, clothing, sunglasses, hats, etc.
 - Does the person have a weapon? If so, what kind?
 - Was the person carrying anything?
 - Is everyone still on scene, or have involved parties left? Where did they go?
- **VEHICLE DESCRIPTION:**
 - Vehicle color, make, model, license plate number, number of doors, other identifying informations (stickers, spoilers, window tinting)
 - Direction of travel

You may feel panicky, but try to stay in calm. The operator needs the answers to these questions to decide what type of emergency workers should be sent and where to send them.

Stay on the phone and answer the questions as calmly as you can. Sometimes it may sound as if the dispatcher is repeating themselves with the same questions but you may give more detail the second time. There may have been something you've forgotten earlier. Please don't become irritated with them, they are trying to obtain important information and to assist you.

If someone is unconscious or has stopped breathing, the 911 operator may give you instructions for immediate help that you can provide, such as administering CPR or relieving choking if you've been trained.

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Q. What if I dial 911 by mistake?

DO NOT HANG UP! Before you hang up, be sure to tell the dispatcher that you have dialed 9-1-1 by mistake, and that you do not need emergency help! This is particularly important if you dial from a business phone with several phone lines. Anytime the police dispatcher receives a 9-1-1 "hang-up"; the caller must be contacted to be sure that no actual emergency exists. If your business has dozens or even hundreds of phone lines, it may be impossible for the dispatcher to determine who, if anyone needs help, and an officer must then be dispatched to the address.

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